

**General Assembly**

Distr.: General
20 December 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session

Agenda item 55 (b)

Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation

Letter dated 16 December 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am writing in response to the letter dated 28 November 2005 from the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia (A/60/571) addressed to you with regard to agenda item 55 (b) entitled "Groups of countries in special situations: specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation", which was circulated to the Member States.

Turkey has been willing to normalize its relations with Armenia since Armenia's independence in 1991. The most recent of these attempts are the contacts which the Turkish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdullah Gül, had with his Armenian counterpart on the margins of various international meetings. However, as long as the hostile policies of Armenia in the region continue, I am afraid there is nothing much that Turkey can do to achieve this goal. First and foremost, one has to be friendly to have friends.

In this respect, the references in article 11 of the Armenian Declaration of Independence to the Eastern Anatolia Region that is part of Turkey as "Western Armenia" and in article 13, paragraph 2, of the Constitution of Armenia to Mount Ağrı that is situated in Turkey as a part of the coat of arms of Armenia, are not coherent with the basic principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The Republic of Armenia claims that those references are only made on the basis of "historical Armenia" and in the context of recognition of the so-called "Armenian Genocide" at the beginning of the twentieth century in that historical geographical area. The continuous reference to "historical Armenia" or "historical geographical area" while mentioning a neighbouring country triggers doubts as to the real



/
4 motivations of Armenia. Furthermore, contrary to what the Permanent Representative of Armenia claims in his letter, Armenia has still not officially, publicly and unconditionally recognized the existing common border between Turkey and Armenia as established by the Kars and Gümrü Treaties of 1921.

Turkey believes in the importance of dialogue and exchange of views in order to overcome both regional and bilateral problems. The open rejection by Armenia of Turkey's concrete proposal to establish a Turkish-Armenian joint commission of historians and other relevant experts to study the events that took place during a particular period of time of our common history has been most disappointing. Armenia's intransigence and non-cooperative stance in this respect inevitably cloud bilateral relations between the two countries. Turkey sincerely believes that this commission, by examining the events, will clarify the situation, thus contributing to the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations.

Turkey hopes and expects that Armenia will take a strategic decision on the future of Turkish-Armenian relations and revise its policy accordingly. Turkey believes that this revision will not only positively contribute to Turkish-Armenian relations but will also have constructive impact on the peace, security and welfare of the whole region.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 55 (b).

(Signed) Baki İlkin
Ambassador
Permanent Representative